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SENATE MEMORIAL 72

48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2007

INTRODUCED BY

Bernadette M. Sanchez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO SUBMIT AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN TO PROVIDE FOR A CONTINUUM OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS.

WHEREAS, in 2003-2004, New Mexico had the highest rate of past-year illicit drug dependence or abuse among persons twelve years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, also in 2003-2004, New Mexico ranked second in the nation for the rate of persons twelve years of age or older who needed but did not receive treatment for illicit drug use; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico had the fourth highest rate in the nation of past-year alcohol dependence or abuse among persons twelve years of age or older in 2003-2004; and

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1 WHEREAS, New Mexico ranked fifth in the nation for the
2 rate of persons twelve years of age or older who needed but did
3 not receive treatment for alcohol abuse in 2003-2004; and

4 WHEREAS, New Mexico's alcohol-related chronic liver
5 disease death rate has increased by twenty-four percent over
6 the past two decades, although the rate for the nation as a
7 whole has decreased by twenty-one percent. More generally,
8 alcohol and drug abuse contribute to overall rates of substance
9 abuse-related deaths in New Mexico that have been among the
10 highest in the nation for the past two decades; and

11 WHEREAS, nine of the ten leading causes of death in New
12 Mexico are at least partially caused by alcohol, tobacco or
13 other drug use; and

14 WHEREAS, every dollar invested in substance abuse
15 treatment saves taxpayers seven dollars forty-six cents (\$7.46)
16 in societal costs, and with some outpatient treatment programs,
17 total savings can exceed costs by a ratio of twelve to one; and

18 WHEREAS, a study of Washington state's medicaid program
19 found that the provision of substance abuse treatment was
20 associated with a reduction in medical expenses of
21 approximately two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500)
22 annually. This estimated saving was equal to the cost of
23 treatment and represented approximately thirty-five percent of
24 the annual medicaid expenses incurred by welfare clients with
25 substance abuse problems; and

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1 WHEREAS, nationally, patients' medical costs decreased by
2 thirty percent on average between the year prior to substance
3 abuse treatment intake and the third year following intake.
4 Both medicaid and non-medicaid patients showed average declines
5 of thirty percent in medical costs from the baseline period to
6 the third year following treatment initiation; and

7 WHEREAS, between 2003 and 2004, a national survey showed
8 that the cost of treatment or a lack of insurance for treatment
9 were the most common reasons for not receiving treatment.
10 Among those who made an unsuccessful effort to get treatment,
11 over forty percent reported cost or insurance barriers as the
12 reason for not receiving care; and

13 WHEREAS, in 2005, the governor's interagency substance
14 abuse task force recommended that the state should "[e]nhance
15 use of medicaid funding for substance abuse-related treatment
16 services"; and

17 WHEREAS, the state is currently spending ten million
18 dollars (\$10,000,000) for substance abuse treatment without
19 receiving federal matching funds;

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
21 OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department be requested
22 to submit an amendment to the state medicaid plan to the
23 federal centers for medicare and medicaid services no later
24 than July 1, 2008 to provide a continuum of rehabilitative
25 services to people with substance abuse problems. The

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1 continuum of rehabilitative services outlined in the amendment
2 shall be no less than comparable to the continuum of services
3 provided to people with mental health diagnoses; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
5 transmitted to the human services department.

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